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of an increasing financial burden, the crafts, bent on the maintenance of their existence and ideals, were forced to harden their protective armor. And so there was organized that whole structure of gild and town regulation which sought by the exclusion or limitation of competition to secure equal and permanent subsistence conditions for the handicraftsmen of the gilds. Practically all the articulations of this carapace may be studied in Brussels craft-gild history. The growing exclusiveness in apprenticeship and mastership regulations, until in one instance, that of the butchers, the craft became ultimately a hereditary caste, the *Zunftzwang*, which here stood at the middle rather than at the initial stage of gild development, the minute control of production and sale, of wages and prices, all this apparatus of protection and restriction is described in sober detail by Des Marez — from the civic solemnities which attended the preparation of the standard loaf of bread, the *pain-type*, to the petty and acrimonious disputes on the delimitation of work as between rival crafts. Many of these minutiae merely elaborate well-known features of gild development, but there emerge some points worthy of note, such, for instance, as the discussion of the patrician drapers' gild-jurisdiction as compared with that of the craft-gilds and the relation of both to the *échevinage*. The sections dealing with the military obligations of the craftsmen and with the charitable brotherhoods associated with the gilds, which undertook to provide relief in case of accident, sickness, and old age, possess a value enhanced by the fact that these sides of town life have ordinarily been too much neglected. On some other topics of general interest Des Marez's material throws little light. He follows the fashion in criticizing Bücher's "wage-work" and "price-work" as historical categories and he attempts a not altogether convincing correction of von Below's thesis of the non-existence of an exclusively wholesale merchant class in medieval society. The term "great merchant", as Des Marez remarks, must be relative to the stage of commercial progress, and in the sense in which it is used by Bücher may be admissible, but inconclusive instances from so late a date as the end of the fifteenth century are hardly sufficient to invalidate von Below's special contention.

EDWIN F. GAY .

A Critical Study of the Various Dates assigned to the Birth of Christopher Columbus. The Real Date 1451. With a Bibliography of the Question. By HENRY VIGNAUD. (London: Henry Stevens, Son, and Stiles. 1903. Pp. xii, 121.)

HARDLY any subject relating to Columbus has proved more baffling to investigators than the determination of the date of his birth. That a man who wrote so much as did Columbus should not once have given his own age among the many autobiographical passages in his writings is strange; that the statements he did make which bear on his age cannot possibly be harmonized seems at first even more perplexing. These little oversights on the part of the admiral have been so prolific in labors for

inquiring posterity that one is tempted to suspect that he had it in mind to mystify impertinent curiosity.

Of late years there has been an increasing tendency to accept 1446-1447 as the real date. The basis on which this conclusion rests are: the fact that on March 20, 1472, Columbus witnessed a will, to do which it is assumed that he must have reached the full majority of twenty-five years of age; and the fact that on May 25, 1471, he bound himself by a contract with the consent of his parents, which implies that he had not then reached his majority. These conclusions Mr. Vignaud contests by showing that it was not necessary for a witness to have reached his full majority and that sometimes the parent's consent to a son's contract was necessary even after the son was twenty-five.

Mr. Vignaud then discusses the laws of Genoa relating to the subordinate or qualified majorities at sixteen, seventeen, and eighteen years, besides the full majority of twenty-five. The next step in the argument is supplied by a document discovered by Staglieno in 1887. It reads: "Christofforus de Colombo filius Dominici, major annis decemnovem et in presentia, auctoritate, concilio et consensu dicti Dominici ejus patris", etc. ("Christopher Columbus upwards of nineteen years of age", etc.). This has usually been interpreted to mean over nineteen and under twenty-five, but Mr. Richard Davey, a well-known English journalist, suggested in 1892 that it meant just what it said, "over nineteen years of age", and that it was equivalent in ordinary usage to saying "nineteen years old", or that he had passed his nineteenth birthday. Professor Gonzalez de la Rosa supported this view in 1900, and it is now taken up by Mr. Vignaud, who makes the strong point that as no law of Genoa has been found prescribing the attainment of nineteen years as a legal qualification for any acts, and as the various legal ages were sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, and twenty-five, there is no occasion for or meaning in recording that a party to a contract was over nineteen unless it was to state his age. Otherwise it would be said that he had passed the majority of eighteen, or that he was less than twenty five years, "Minor viginti quinque annis". As nineteen was not one of these specified ages conferring a partial majority, "major annis decemnovem" means simply nineteen years old. Had Columbus been twenty or twenty-one it would have read "major viginti annis", etc. On p. 89 Mr. Vignaud quotes from Desimoni a similar expression, *e. g.*, "major annorum XXII", when the interpretation seems to be the same, that at the last birthday the age was twenty-two.

It seems to me that Mr. Vignaud has made out a strong case and that the evidence is at least quite as good for 1451 as for 1446 and much less intricate and uncertain. As is well known, Columbus's early life is still shrouded in a haze which it is difficult to penetrate further than to show that it was not what Las Casas and Ferdinand have given us. That as late as March 20, 1472, he was officially recorded as "lanerius de Jauna", "woolen worker of Genoa", argues, it seems to me, for as late a date of birth as is consistent with other data. Such a description,

while not excluding his having begun to follow the sea, would hardly be used if he were already an expert seaman. Again, that one who began a seafaring life much after twenty should have become so accomplished a navigator seems improbable. The main misgiving that one feels about Mr. Vignaud's argument is in supposing that an expert Italian lawyer like Desimoni is mistaken in his interpretation of Genoese usage in regard to such matters as the deductions to be made from the notarial documents, for although Mr. Vignaud cites one statement of Desimoni's in favor of his view, Desimoni's own conclusions are quite positively in favor of 1446-1447. One feels, too, that the interpretation of "major annis decemnovem" as asserting that Columbus had completed his nineteenth year, while natural and probable, is not certain. In the mass of notarial documents collected by Staglieno there are very few statements of the age of the parties, and when the age is stated the following form is used more than once: "etatis annorum. XI. in circa" (*Raccolta Colombiano*, Part II, vol. 1, 83).

Mr. Vignaud has supplied all the data for an independent judgment on the part of the student, reprinting extracts from the Genoese statutes as to legal ages, all the notarial documents bearing on the question which Columbus signed, all the arguments given for the series of supposable birth-dates from 1430 to 1458, a list of the authorities supporting these dates respectively arranged under years, and a general bibliography of the sources as well. Whatever may finally be the conclusion of critics on Mr. Vignaud's contention, he has placed students under great obligations by thus collecting the requisite data to enable one to see almost at a glance how the case stands with each of the rival dates, which outnumber the cities which competed for the honor of Homer's birth. Under 1451 Ruge is wrongly cited as favoring that date in his *Columbus*. He comes out positively for 1446-1447 on page 24 of that work. The publishers have clothed this monograph in a most attractive form.

EDWARD G. BOURNE.

The Oldest Map with the Name America of the Year 1507 and the Carta Marina of the Year 1516 by M. Waldseemüller (Ilacomilus).

Edited by JOSEPH FISCHER and FR. R. VON WIESER. (London: Henry Stevens, Son, and Stiles. 1903. Pp. 55, and 27 plates.)

DURING the last twenty-five years a large number of valuable maps, the work of early sixteenth-century cartographers, have been brought to light, notably the Cantino, the Canerio, the Hamy, and the Waldseemüller world-maps of 1507 and 1516. Among these, the two last-named, which are also the last discovered, hold a most important place. It perhaps would not be difficult to demonstrate that they hold first place in the influence exerted.

Such materials for studying early cartography are of course none too frequent, for, as Kohl well says, "With no class of historical documents has time been more destructive". Very nearly all of the charts drawn